

Remarks

Applicants' representative thanks Examiner Rodriguez for the indication of allowable subject matter. In the office action dated March 9, 2004 the Examiner rejected as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) claims 1-7 and 21-26 over Admitted Prior Art in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,778,787 to Cannon (hereinafter Cannon) and U.S. Patent Pub. 2002/0008928 to Takahashi (hereinafter Takahashi), claims 11 and 13-15 over U.S. Patent No. 6,519,715 to Takashi et al. (hereinafter Takashi) in view of Cannon, Admitted Prior Art and U.S. Patent No. 6,327,112 to Ide et al. (hereinafter Ide), claim 12 over Takashi, Admitted Prior Art, Cannon and Takahashi in view of U.S. Patent Pub. 2002/0101674 to Ichihara et al. (hereinafter Ichihara), claims 9, 10, 28 and 29 over Admitted Prior Art, Cannon and Takahashi in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,905,532 to Ikeda (hereinafter Ikeda), claim 16 over Takashi in view of Cannon, Admitted Prior Art, Takahashi and Ide and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,771,131 to Pirzadeh (hereinafter Pirzadeh), and claim 17 over Takashi, Cannon, Admitted Prior Art, Takahashi and Ide and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,932,352 to Culp (hereinafter Culp). Claims 8, 18 and 27 were previously canceled. Claims 19 and 20 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

By this amendment, Applicants' representative amends claims 1, 11, 20 and 21, cancels claim 19, and adds claims 30 and 31. Claim 20 was amended for consistency. Support for the amendment to claims 1, 11 and 21, and for new claims 30 and 31 can be found, for example, in now canceled claim 19 and, for example, on Fig. 6 and in the specification on page 13, l. 23 through page 14, l. 10. As such, no new matter has been added.

With respect to the Examiner's rejections, the Examiner is invited to consider the following remarks.

Regarding the rejection of independent claims 1, 11 and 21, the independent claims have been amended to provide what is believed to be the allowable subject matter of now canceled dependent claim 19 and any intervening claims.

Regarding claims which depend from the independent claims, Applicants contend that these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons that the independent claims are patentable. Moreover, Applicants contend these claims recite further limitations, in addition to the limitations of the independent claims, which render these claims additionally patentable.

Consequently, in view of the above and in the absence of better art, Applicants' representative respectfully submits the application is in condition for allowance which allowance is respectfully requested. No fee is believed to be due for the filing of this paper. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments as a result of the filing of this paper to our Deposit Account No. 02-3978.

The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to discuss prompt resolution of any remaining issues necessary to place this case in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: April 12, 2004

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